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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the major changes to higher education in the United Kingdom as a result of the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992. These changes include the creation of new universities and new arrangements for the assessment and assurance of quality in higher education. Due mainly to the upgrading of polytechnics to university status, the United Kingdom now possesses 90 universities and 143 colleges, institutes, and other non-university postsecondary schools. A list of these universities and institutions is included. A Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) was created in 1992 by higher education associations to serve as an independent monitor of quality assessment at universities and other institutions. HEQC is composed of three divisions: (1) Credit and Access; (2) Quality Audit; and (3) Quality Enhancement. The organization, goals, and initial activities of each of the three divisions are discussed. The organization and activities of the Higher Education Funding Councils in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland in relation to quality assessment in higher education are examined. A summary of a report entitled "Quality Management and Quality Assurance in European Higher Education: Methods and Mechanisms," by F. A. van Vught and D. F. Westerheijden, is also included. (MDM)

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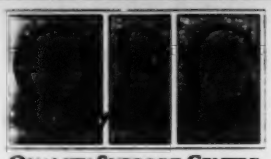

QUALITY SUPPORT CENTRE

ED 373 668

A GUIDE TO THE CHANGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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A new university and college system

In the following pages, we summarise some of the main changes which have occurred as a result of the implementation of the Further and Higher Education Act, 1992 (and associated legislation for Scotland and Wales). These include the creation of new universities and new arrangements for the assessment and assurance of quality.

The university sector in England now comprises some 74 institutions. Scotland has 12 universities, Wales has two and Northern Ireland has two. The student profile of the English university sector is estimated (using 1990 Department for Education figures) as being around 496,000 full-time students (61,000 postgraduates and 435,000 undergraduates) and 222,000 part-time students (63,000 postgraduate and 159,000 undergraduate). This contrasts with the profile of the 'old' universities which had 275,000 full-time students (52,000 postgraduates and 223,000 undergraduates), and 124,000 part-time students (42,000 postgraduate and 82,000 undergraduate). Almost all of the part-time undergraduates were enrolled with the Open University. Although the figures for the new university sector are approximate (and too low - they do not take account of the substantial increases in enrolments since 1990), they serve to illustrate the enormous change which has taken place in the profile of the university system.

However, measured solely in terms of institutional numbers, the non-university sector remains the more substantial. The list supplied to us by HEQC contains the names of 143 institutions. This is a diverse set of institutions offering, in some cases, specialist higher education courses not available in the universities. There is, however, also considerable overlap in the course provision of university and non-university sectors. The latter accounts for around 10% of undergraduate provision in England.

New arrangements for external quality assurance and assessment have been introduced. There are two parallel processes: quality assessment, which is the responsibility of the funding councils, and quality audit, which is the collective responsibility of institutions through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), the Conference of Scottish Centrally Funded Colleges (CSCFC) and the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP). Quality assessment is concerned with the quality of educational provision and the standard of students' performance; quality audit is concerned with the mechanisms and structures which individual institutions of higher education have in place to assure themselves of the quality of their educational provision. Quality audit is a responsibility of the new Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC). Other responsibilities of the HEQC are quality enhancement and credit and access.

Looking beyond the current changes, we have also included details of a background paper under consideration by the European Commission as a basis for developments in quality assurance and management across Europe.

Additional copies of this *Guide*

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Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC)

Last year's White Paper: ***Higher Education - A new framework*** proposed that institutions should establish a quality audit unit. In May 1992 this came into being. It is called the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) and is a company limited by guarantee owned by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (CDP), the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), the Conference of Scottish Centrally Funded Colleges (CSCFC) and the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP). The Company has a Board of Directors chaired by John Stoddart, Principal of Sheffield Hallam University, and thirteen other members representing the parent bodies. The Chief Executive is Malcolm Frazer (currently Chief Executive of CNAA) and the Company Secretary is Graham Middleton (currently Secretary to the CNAA Council). HEQC will have a staff of 32 based in offices in London, Birmingham and Glasgow. There will be three divisions: Credit and Access, Quality Audit and Quality Enhancement.

The Division of Quality Audit (DQA) is directed by Peter Williams (formerly Director of the CVCP Academic Audit Unit - AAU) and has a Steering Council chaired by Kenneth Dixon (formerly Chairman of Rowntree Macintosh). The function of DQA is to carry out quality audit at institutional level throughout higher education in the UK. It is essentially concerned with processes, procedures and their operation, and does not involve any assessment or evaluation of the validity of objectives or of the appropriateness of outcomes. DQA will take over from the AAU the existing programme of audits and in 1993 commence audits of the former PCFC institutions. Auditors from the former polytechnics have been recruited and are being trained and will join the existing AAU auditors. HEQC will work closely with the quality assessment committees of the three Funding Councils.

The Division of Credit and Access (DCA) is directed by Harry Mitchell (formerly CNAA Officer for Scotland). DCA will be responsible for assuring the quality of credit ratings made by institutions within and outwith higher education. It will have other credit accumulation and credit transfer functions including administering a national forum (the "CATS Task Force") acting as a centre for development for UK, European and international initiatives. DCA will also be responsible for the functions currently being carried out under the aegis of the Joint CNAA/CVCP Access Courses Recognition Group.

The Division of Quality Enhancement (DQE) is directed by Mantz Yorke (seconded from Liverpool John Moores University). DQE is the intelligence arm of HEQC, gathering, analysing and disseminating information selectively to those who need it. Its main purpose is to assist institutions to maintain and enhance quality, but it will also be a source of information to HEQC and the other two Divisions. DQE will identify and make contact with organisations such as Universities' Staff Development and Training Unit (USDTU); Open Learning Forum; Open University Quality Support; Training Enterprise and Education Division (TEED); Enterprise in Higher Education (EHE); research and development units and staff development units in particular institutions; and individuals and consultants concerned with aspects of quality assurance in higher education.

HEQC has also accepted the Government's invitation to advise the Secretaries of State for England and Wales on applications for degree awarding powers.

Malcolm Frazer

The Directors of the three operational divisions of the HEQC have provided the following descriptions of their work and responsibilities.

HEQC Division of Quality Audit

The Division of Quality Audit consists of a small permanent directorate and about 60 part-time 'auditors'. It has been established to review and report on the mechanisms and structures which individual institutions of higher education have in place to assure themselves of the quality of their educational provision. The Division is not concerned with an institution's research activities, but its remit does cover postgraduate education, including research students. It is not concerned to monitor individual courses or departments, but looks at whole institutions and the way they manage matters of academic quality and standards.

The work of the Division is intended to provide the general public with an independent and informed view of the extent to which institutions of higher education are properly discharging their responsibilities in respect of the maintenance and enhancement of academic quality and standards. It also hopes to render a service to the institutions themselves, by offering an impartially critical estimation which can help them in their task of providing an effective, and continuously improving, learning experience for students.

The audit process consists essentially of three parts: the provision of briefing documentation; a visit; and a subsequent report.

Audits are normally undertaken by teams of four people (three auditors and an audit secretary) who receive and assimilate a substantial amount of briefing documentation from institutions about the way they assure their quality and standards. The object of providing the material is to give members of the audit team an opportunity to familiarise themselves with all aspects of an institution's quality assurance system, its principles and practices. In particular, auditors scrutinize the five main areas of primary concern to the Division:

- quality assurance in the design, monitoring and evaluation of courses and degree programmes;
- quality assurance in teaching, learning and communication methods;
- quality assurance in student assessment and degree classification;
- quality assurance in relation to academic staff; and
- verification and feedback mechanisms which take account of external examiners' reports, students' views on courses, and the views of external bodies such as professional accrediting bodies and employers.

Institutions also provide information about their broad aims and objectives for the audit teams so that the quality assurance mechanisms can be seen in context.

In their subsequent visits to institutions, which generally last for three days, audit teams seek to discover to what extent the procedures they have been told about exist in practice and are effective. They follow a programme of meetings which they have requested the institution to arrange, with various key or representative groups and individuals. Their agenda is determined in the light of the contents of the briefing documents, and they use 'audit trails' to observe systems and procedures in action at the local, operational level.

Subsequent to the visit, the audit team prepares a draft report. This includes brief background information about the institution, its type, size, academic and environmental characteristics; a description of the audit procedures used; an account of the institution's formally stated aims, objectives, mission, purposes etc, together with any specific strategic policies which have a bearing on its attitudes to matters of quality or academic standards; a summary of the formal procedures adopted by the institution in each of the areas listed in the outline checklist, together with an account of their effectiveness as perceived by the audit team. This may include a note on the extent to which they conform to or vary from, the recommendations in relevant codes of practice. The section also includes comment on any special circumstances affecting the institution, such as resource availability, stage of development and implementation of quality assurance programmes, institutional ethos, etc; a view on the extent to which the institution's academic activity is underpinned by an active, effective and pervasive commitment to fulfilling its stated aims and objectives in matters of academic quality and standards; and a list of suggestions for improvement of quality assurance structures and mechanisms, for consideration by the institution.

Institutions have an opportunity to correct any errors of fact in the draft report, and to comment on any judgement which they consider to have been based on an incorrect understanding of the facts of the matter. In the light of these comments the Division reviews the draft and sends a final version of the report to the institution. The Division is required to make its audit reports public: it does so by means of a limited public circulation, but does not act as the primary distribution agent for individual reports.

In addition to the quality audit of higher education institutions themselves, the HEQC has agreed that the validation by universities of courses at associated institutions should be the subject of a separate audit exercise. Similarly, any substantial franchising activity will be subject to separate review. The present intention of the HEQC is that institutions should be audited every three years.

Auditors are generally senior, highly-experienced serving academics who have agreed to undertake audits on behalf of the Division of Quality Audit over a period of three years. They come from a variety of institutions and have different disciplinary backgrounds. Although they receive training, they are not full-time inspectors or evaluators. In addition, a small number of auditors is recruited from outside higher education. The Division's full-time staff establishment consists of the Director, Deputy Director, five Assistant Directors, the Divisional Administrator and three other support staff. A Steering Council, chaired by Mr K H M Dixon, and with fourteen members from within and outside higher education, provides oversight of the Division's activities.

Peter Williams

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HEQC Division of Quality Enhancement

The Division of Quality Enhancement (DQE) has been established within the HEQC to take a leading role in the enhancement of quality in higher education institutions. Working in national and international arenas, it will become a focal point for the identification of needs, and for activities designed to meet those needs. In this way, DQE will become a valuable resource to assist institutions in the continuing development of quality in their educational provision.

The Division has offices in Birmingham and London with a staffing complement of three Assistant Directors and a Senior Project Officer, in addition to the Director and support staff.

The Division will serve higher education in a variety of ways. These will include:

- gathering from a range of sources information which bears on quality, analysing and evaluating this information and circulating the outcomes to institutions;
- commissioning and conducting projects, reports, conferences and workshops devoted to quality enhancement, either independently or in collaboration with other interested parties;
- acting as a catalyst for discussion focusing upon quality enhancement theory and practice;
- working, where appropriate, with institutions on an individual basis;
- working with other organisations committed to the advancement of quality;
- developing a national and international compendium of knowledge about quality-related matters both within and beyond higher education; and
- contributing to the development of national policy on quality in higher education.

DQE needs to keep abreast of contemporary quality theory and practice both within and outside higher education. To this end, it is establishing an expert advisory group with members drawn from diverse backgrounds including industry, public service, the student body and higher education itself.

The small size of DQE makes networking critical to the achievement of its objectives. Within their multi-valent roles, key duties of the senior staff will be to liaise with a group of institutions and other bodies, and to communicate developments, needs and potential courses of action to other members of the Division and, where appropriate, to the Council.

DQE has a modest budget for developmental activities which relate to quality. Initial projects under way include:

- workshops for external examiners (in conjunction with the Quality Support Centre of the Open University);
- a feasibility study for a national database for external examiners;
- the evaluation and revision of current guidelines on quality to meet the needs of the unified higher education sector; and
- the continuation of a CNAA project aiming to develop performance indicators which reflect the quality of academic programmes.

Other activities identified by DQE for future work include the development of the concept of 'value-added', with a view to identifying valid and reliable performance indicators; a review of the role of external examiners within an increasingly modular context; the development of quality assurance for inter-institutional collaborative activities; and the assessment of personal/transferable skills.

DQE's agenda is full and ambitious. The Division believes that by working in partnership with organisations and individuals it can make a significant contribution to the enhancement of a high quality education system.

Mantz Yorke

HEQC Division of Credit and Access

One of the major reasons for the increasing interest in credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) is that it provides institutions with a powerful tool for opening-up access to learning opportunities. The application of CAT schemes in a systematic and proactive way leads to the potential for award bearing programmes to incorporate credit for learning achievements derived from, for example, prior certificated and experiential learning, work-based learning and negotiated learning contracts.

The Division of Credit and Access (DCA) has, therefore, been established by the HEQC in recognition of the need for the assurance of the quality of access arrangements and the credit ratings made by institutions of the learning achieved both within and outwith conventional settings. This is to ensure that students, employees, employers, parents, professional bodies and other agencies have confidence in the comparability of credit ratings and access arrangements across higher education. The DCA will, therefore, work with higher education institutions and other appropriate bodies in facilitating access and credit transfer within and outwith the higher education institutions through the development of reliable and credible systems of assuring the quality of portable credits.

The DCA will act as a centre of development for UK, European and international credit and access initiatives. Features of the work of DCA include:

- assisting higher education institutions in the development of credit and access related activities eg institutional CAT schemes, access programmes, assessment of prior experiential learning (APEL), etc;
- identifying obstacles to the development of a system of portable credits as a significant feature of higher education provision and finding ways of overcoming them;
- liaising and working with appropriate bodies in developing ways in which portable credits in other sectors of education, particularly vocational education and training and 16-19 provision, can interlock with the CAT schemes in higher education;
- identifying, developing and implementing strategies for more effective marketing of portable credits to students, employers and institutions;
- maintaining and developing the national framework for recognition of access courses eg database development, review of Authorised Validating Agencies (AVAs), support for the Standing Conference of AVAs.

Of considerable importance is the collaborative venture between ECCTIS 2000 Ltd and the DCA for the dissemination of information on credit transfer opportunities to students, potential students and their advisers.

The Board of HEQC has agreed that the CAT 'task force' initiative, originally proposed at the *Learning Without Walls* conference (Oxford 1991) should be undertaken by the DCA. However, the Board of HEQC and members of the Steering Group, chaired by Professor Peter Toyne of Liverpool John Moores University and established to assist the Director of the DCA, Harry Mitchell, in overseeing the task force initiative, considered the title 'task force' as too suggestive of a body established with the purpose and powers to resolve matters which were problematic. It has, therefore, been replaced by the more appropriate title of HEQC CAT Development Action Group.

In order to assist the work of the HEQC CAT Development Action Group, Liverpool John Moores University has been contracted, following competitive tender, to undertake a CAT development project. The project is to be directed by Professor David Robertson. The overall aim of the development project is specifically to build up an information source and to make proposals to the HEQC CAT Development Action Group on ways in which the further development of CAT-based learning might be approached.

Significant initiatives in credit accumulation and transfer and access are already underway in the UK and at local, regional and national levels. In order to encourage, develop and maintain active interchange of good practice among the institutions the DCA is organised to operate within a local and regional, as well as national, context through locating an Assistant Director in each of the following areas: Scotland & Northern Ireland (Glasgow); Wales and Midlands (Birmingham); South (London); and the North (location to be decided). The Assistant Directors will work closely with the HEQC CAT development project team so that the DCA can disseminate and implement, both during and beyond the life of the project, appropriate findings.

Harry Mitchell

Quality assessment by the funding councils

Assessment of quality in England

It is a statutory obligation placed on the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 that the Council shall 'secure that provision is made for assessing the quality of education provided in institutions for whose activities they provide, or are considering providing, financial support under this Part of the Act'.

The objectives of quality assessment are:

- to assess the quality of teaching and learning;
- to produce reports on the assessments which will be published;
- to advise the HEFCE on the quality of provision so that quality can be taken into account in the funding of institutions.

A set of eight teaching quality pilot projects was undertaken in the spring of 1992 in the subject areas of engineering and physical sciences. Assessments were made in the context of the institution's mission, and three gradings were possible: unsatisfactory, satisfactory or excellent. The focus, however, was on the evaluation of the methodology. The key areas on which the assessments were based in the spring pilots were as follows:

- aims and curricula;
- academic management and quality control;
- resources;
- staff development;
- the quality of teaching and the standard of students' work;
- students - nature of intake, support systems and progression.

Eight test assessments, using the experiences gained from the pilots, were carried out in the autumn of 1992 in the areas of law and business management. Again, evaluation of the assessment methodology was the focus of the work. The test assessments are likely to increase the emphasis on the use of performance indicators and institutional self-assessment.

The Council is also charged, under the Act, to set up a Quality Assessment Committee to give them advice on the discharge of their duty to assess quality. This has now been done and the Committee meetings held in September and December.

A programme of assessments will start at the latest by February 1993 and these will inform funding for 1994-95. For 1993-94 funding, however, quality assessments will be available only for the Initial Teacher Training element of the Education Academic Subject Category, where the Council will continue to utilise HMI judgements.

In the light of the responses to a consultation paper, issued in October 1992, and the evaluation of the methodolology in the pilot and test assessments undertaken in the Spring and Autumn 1992, the HEFCE decided at its meeting on 9 December 1992 to proceed with a substantive programme of quality assessments starting in February 1993.

The four subject areas which will be assessed are mechanical engineering, law, history and chemistry.

The Council is well into the process of recruiting contract and specialist assessors from nominations made by higher education institutions and those who responded to advertisements. All the assessors will receive full and appropriate training.

A circular has been issued which describes the progress to date in developing the HEFCE's approach to quality assessments. The circular also sets out the timetable for the assessment of the quality of education in 1993. A separate circular has also been issued which sets out the method of assessment.

Further information about the approach to quality assessment in England can be obtained from Alun Thomas, Head of Quality Assessment Division, The Higher Education Funding Council for England, Northavon House, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QD.

Alun Thomas

Assessment of quality in Wales

In common with requirements placed on the Funding Councils in England and Scotland, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 places a statutory obligation on the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to establish a Quality Assessment Committee and to "secure that provision is made for assessing the quality of education provided in institutions for whose activities they provide, or are consideration providing, financial support under this part of the Act".

The Quality Assessment Division maintains close contact with its counterpart in HEFCE. The recently published consultative document on quality assessment was circulated to institutions in Wales and the responses collated with a view to informing the redrafting of the working method for assessment presently underway.

At its first meeting in November 1992, the Quality Assessment Committee underlined the importance of moving in parallel with developments in England. A substantive programme of assessments in selected areas is planned to commence in April 1993. The methodology will be in common with that deployed in England, but the Committee has stressed the importance of viewing the approaches adopted as developmental, requiring careful evaluation during the first few years of their use. It is likely that the Quality Assessment Divisions of HEFCE and HEFCW will move towards establishing a common register of assessors and will plan, as far as possible, to organise subject assessment jointly.

Further information about the approach to quality assessment in the higher education sector in Wales can be obtained from:

Mike Laughaume
Head of Quality Assessment Division
Welsh Funding Council
Lambourne House
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Llanishen
Cardiff CF4 5GL.

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Assessment of quality in Scotland

The Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) issued a consultation paper on the assessment of the quality of provision on offer in higher education institutions in Scotland on 24 August 1992.

It proposes assessments of economics and electrical and electronic engineering in the first instance and is to adopt an approach which builds on institutions' self-assessments. External assessments will be undertaken by experienced academics currently practising in the discipline concerned, co-ordinated and supported as necessary by SHEFC's core staff.

Objectives

Seven objectives are listed for quality assessment:

- to assess the quality of educational provision and the standard of students' performance;
- to analyse the findings of quality assessment in order to monitor trends in the general level of quality of provision and its relationship to course provision;
- to produce brief reports that would identify strengths and weaknesses, promote good practice, and stimulate necessary improvements;
- to advise SHEFC on the relative quality of provision in institutions;
- to monitor the implementation of recommendations in earlier reports and encourage progressive improvement by a programme of 'revisiting';
- to form the basis of advice to SHEFC on the promotion and maintenance of quality through innovations and developments in the curriculum, teaching, and student assessment practice;
- to inform customers such as students and employers of the quality of educational provision on offer, thereby promoting competition and choice.

Most of the consultation paper is concerned with the procedures to be adopted in the quality assessment process itself and, in particular, its capacity to assess relative quality.

A quality assessment framework

The paper proposes a framework for the assessment of quality, to act both as a guide to institutional self-assessment and also as a framework for the Council's own assessment teams. The separate elements of the framework are as follows:

- aims and curricula;
- curriculum design and review;
- the teaching and learning environment;
- staff resources;
- learning resources;
- course organisation;
- teaching and learning practice;
- student support;
- assessment and monitoring;
- students' work;
- teaching and learning output and outcomes;
- quality control.

For each element of the framework, the paper goes on to identify a subset of factors that will be taken into account. For example, under course organisation, the paper lists the following:

- learning programmes (courses) are effectively organised and managed;
- teaching programmes are clearing articulated, made known to students and regularly monitored;
- course work and assessments are systematically scheduled and coordinated among lecturers and specialisms;
- feedback is regularly obtained from students, analysed and acted upon as appropriate.

The Process

The assessment teams will scrutinise documentation provided by the institutions, including the institutions' own self-assessments, in order to reach evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of courses.

An outcome of the institutional self-assessment is intended to be a ranking of a course on a three point scale ie excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. The external quality assessors will then visit those institutions claiming excellence and also those 'where the outcome of self-assessment would indicate that a visit should be undertaken'.

It is intended that quality assessments should lead to published reports on the quality of provision on offer with a view to assisting students, employers and other client groups to become better informed on the quality of educational provision and student experience.

The Council has established a Quality Assessment Committee to advise on the scope and coverage of published reports and to be responsible for the assessment process as described above.

It is intended to complete the exercise for economics and electrical and electronic engineering prior to April 1993. However, there is an acceptance that the volume of assessments to be undertaken may make this unrealistic in which case the aim would be to complete the assessments in the early part of the 1993-94 academic session.

The Council agreed in December to the introduction of quality assessment in the academic year 1992-93 broadly along the lines proposed in the consultation paper. Institutions offering undergraduate and taught master's provision in economics and in electrical and electronic engineering have been invited to submit self-assessments based on a revised quality framework .

Among the issues on which institutions expressed a significant measure of agreement in commenting on the consultation paper were that:

- quality assessments should be based on an evaluation of institutions' own assessments of quality at subject level; and
- the length of the cycle for conducting quality assessments should be 5 years.

Further information about the approach to quality assessment in Scotland can be obtained from Jim Donaldson, Director of Quality Assessment, The Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, PO Box 1037, Edinburgh, EH1 1DJ.

Assessment of quality in Northern Ireland

The new Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC) under the chairmanship of Sir Kenneth Bloomfield has been established alongside the Funding Councils of England, Scotland and Wales to advise Government on the planning and funding of higher education in Northern Ireland. NIHEC will take account of, and be guided by, Government policy within the United Kingdom, while at the same time taking full account of Northern Ireland circumstances. In doing so it will ensure that standards of provision are comparable with those in the remainder of the United Kingdom and that Northern Ireland remains to the forefront of higher education developments within the United Kingdom.

The new Council will have close links with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and will build on earlier relationships with the Universities Funding Council.

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Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC)

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Company Secretary:
Mr Graham Middleton
Director of Quality Audit:
Mr Peter Williams
Director of Quality Enhancement: Professor Mantz Yorke
Director of Credit Accumulation and Access: Mr Harry Mitchell

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Membership of the Quality Assessment Committee for Wales

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Higher education institutions in the United Kingdom

Universities

England

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Aston University
University of Bath
University of Birmingham
Bournemouth University (Bournemouth Polytechnic)
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University of Brighton (Brighton Polytechnic)
University of Bristol
Brunel University
University of Buckingham
University of Cambridge
University of Central England in Birmingham (Birmingham Polytechnic)
University of Central Lancashire (Lancashire Polytechnic)
London Guildhall University (City of London Polytechnic)
City University
Coventry University (Coventry Polytechnic)
Cranfield Institute of Technology
De Montfort University (Leicester Polytechnic)
University of Derby* (Derbyshire College of Higher Education)
University of Durham
University of East Anglia
University of East London (Polytechnic of East London)
University of Essex
University of Exeter
University of Greenwich (Thames Polytechnic)
University of Hertfordshire (The Hatfield Polytechnic)
University of Huddersfield (The Huddersfield Polytechnic)
University of Hull
University of Humberside (Humberside Polytechnic)
University of Keele
University of Kent at Canterbury
University of Kingston (Kingston Polytechnic)
University of Lancaster
University of Leeds
Leeds Metropolitan University (Leeds Polytechnic)
University of Leicester
Liverpool John Moores University (Liverpool Polytechnic)
University of Liverpool
London Business School
University of London
University of Loughborough
University of Manchester
Manchester Metropolitan University (Manchester Polytechnic)
Middlesex University (Middlesex Polytechnic)
University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST)
Manchester Business School
University of Newcastle upon Tyne
University of North London (The Polytechnic of North London)
University of Northumbria at Newcastle (Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic)
University of Nottingham
Nottingham Trent University (Nottingham Polytechnic)
University of Oxford
Oxford Brookes University (Oxford Polytechnic)
University of Plymouth (Polytechnic South West)
University of Portsmouth (Portsmouth Polytechnic)
University of Reading
Royal College of Art
University of Salford
University of Sheffield
Sheffield Hallam University (Sheffield City Polytechnic)
University of Southampton
South Bank University (South Bank Polytechnic)
University of Sunderland (Sunderland Polytechnic)
University of Surrey
University of Sussex
Staffordshire University (Staffordshire Polytechnic)
University of Teesside (Teesside Polytechnic)
Thames Valley University (West London Polytechnic)
University of West of England, Bristol (Bristol Polytechnic)
University of Westminster (The Polytechnic of Central London)
University of Wolverhampton (Wolverhampton Polytechnic)
University of Warwick
University of York

Scotland

University of Aberdeen
University of Dundee
University of Edinburgh
University of Glasgow
Glasgow Caledonian University (Glasgow Polytechnic)
Heriot-Watt University
Napier University (Napier Polytechnic)
University of Paisley (Paisley College of Technology)
The Robert Gordon University (The Robert Gordon Institute of Technology)
University of St Andrew's
University of Stirling
University of Strathclyde

Northern Ireland

The Queen's University of Belfast
University of Ulster

Wales

University of Glamorgan (The Polytechnic of Wales)
The University of Wales

United Kingdom

The Open University

* Title not yet approved by the Privy Council

Non-university institutions

The following information has been prepared by HEQC for its database. Comments on the accuracy of the information and the use of the database should be addressed to Mr D M Williams, Assistant Director, Chief Executive's Office, HEQC, 344-354 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8BP, tel: 071 278 4411.

KEY

1 HEFCE
2 HEFCW
3 SHEFC
■ Member of the Consortium of Independent Colleges and Research Institutions
◆ Member of Standing Conference of Principals
▲ Member of Conference of Scottish Centrally Funded Colleges

Validating university is given in brackets, where known

England

All Nations Christian College (Open) ■
Anglo-European College of Chiropractic (Open) ■
Ashridge Management College (City)
Bath College of Higher Education (degree awarding) 1 ◆
Bedford College of Higher Education (De Montfort) ◆
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies (Birmingham)
Bishop Grossette College, Lincoln (Hull) 1 ◆
Blackburn College (Lancaster)
Blackfriars, Oxford (Oxford)
Bolton Institute of Higher Education (degree awarding)
Bradford and Ilkley Community College (Bradford)
Bretton Hall (Leeds) 1 ◆
British Institute of Management (Open)
British Isles Nazarene College (Manchester) ■
British School of Osteopathy (Open) ■
British Telecom (Open)
Buckinghamshire College of Higher Education (Brunel) 1 ◆
Central Manchester College of Technology
Central School of Speech and Drama (Open) 1 ◆
Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education (degree awarding) 1 ◆
Chester College of Higher Education (Liverpool) 1 ◆
Chichester Theological College (Southampton)

Christ Church College of Higher Education, Canterbury (Kent) 1 ◆
Colchester Institute (Anglia)
College of Ripon and York St John (Leeds) 1 ◆
College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth (Exeter) 1 ◆
Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education (Manchester Metropolitan & Nottingham) ◆
Croydon College (Oxford Brookes)
Dartington College of Arts (Plymouth) 1 ◆
Doncaster College (Sheffield Hallam, Huddersfield & Leeds)
Edge Hill College of Higher Education, Ormskirk (Lancaster) 1 ◆
Elim Bible College (Open)
European Business School (Open) ■
Falmouth School of Art and Design (Plymouth) 1 ◆
Guildhall School of Music and Drama (Kent & City)
Harper Adams Agricultural College (Open) 1 ◆
Havering College of Further and Higher Education (Open)
Henley Management College (Brunel)
Hertfordshire College of Art and Design (Hertfordshire)
Hillcroft College (Open)
Institute of Advanced Nursing Education, London (Manchester) 1
Jews' College, London (London)
Kent Institute of Art and Design (Kent) 1 ◆
King Alfred's College (Southampton) 1 ◆
La Sainte Union College of Higher Education, Southampton (Southampton) 1 ◆
Laban Centre for Movement and Dance (City University) ■
Leo Baeck College (Open)
Liverpool Institute of Higher Education (Liverpool) 1 ◆
London Bible College (Brunel)
London Contemporary Dance School (Kent)
Loughborough College of Art and Design (Nottingham Trent) 1 ◆
Luton College of Higher Education (degree awarding) 1 ◆
Maryvale Institute of Religious Education(Open)
Mid Kent College of Higher and Further Education (Kent)
National Coaching Foundation (Open)
Nene College, Northampton (Leicester) 1 ◆
New College, Durham (Open & Durham)
Newbold College (Open)
Newman College, Birmingham (Birmingham) 1 ◆
Norfolk Institute of Art and Design(Anglia)
North Cheshire College, Warrington (Manchester) ◆
North East Surrey College of Technology (Open & Surrey)
North Riding College, Scarborough (Leeds) 1 ◆
Norwich City College of Further and Higher Education (Anglia) ◆
Oak Hill College (Middlesex)
Pinderfields College of Physiotherapy, Wakefield (Leeds)
Queen Elizabeth Hospital School of Physiotherapy (Birmingham)
Queen's College, Birmingham (Birmingham)
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication (Royal College of Art) 1 ◆
Ripon College, Oxford (Oxford)
Roehampton Institute of Higher Education (Surrey) 1 ◆
Roffey Park Management College, Horsham (Sussex)
Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama (Kent) 1 ◆
Royal Academy of Music, London (London) 1
Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester (Bath, Buckingham, Nottingham & Reading) ■
Royal Naval College, Greenwich (Surrey)
Royal Naval Engineering College (Plymouth)
Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester) 1
Ruskin College (Open)
Salford College of Technology (Salford) 1 ◆
Salisbury and Wells Theological College (Southampton)
School of Clinical Perfusion Science (Open)
Selly Oak Colleges (Birmingham & Open)
Sotheby's Educational Studies (Manchester) ■
Southampton Institute of Higher Education (Nottingham Trent & Southampton) 1 ◆
Southampton University College of Nursing and Midwifery
St Helens Community College (Open)
St John's College, Nottingham (Nottingham & Open) ■
St John's Seminary, Wonersh
St Martin's College, Lancaster (Lancaster) 1 ◆
St Mary's College, Twickenham (Surrey) 1 ◆
St Stephen's House, Oxford (Oxford)
Stockport College of Further and Higher Education (Manchester)
Suffolk College (East Anglia & Nottingham Trent)
Tavistock Clinic, London (Brunel & East London)
Templeton College, Oxford (Oxford)
The College of Petroleum Studies, Oxford (Brunel, Leeds, London & Salford)
The London Institute (Open) 1 ◆
Trinity and All Saints College, Horsforth, Leeds (Leeds) 1 ◆
Trinity College, Bristol (Bristol)
Trinity College of Music, London (London) 1
West Herts College (Hertfordshire)
West London Institute of Higher Education (Brunel) 1 ◆
West Surrey College of Art and Design (degree awarding) 1 ◆
West Sussex Institute of Higher Education (Southampton) 1 ◆
Westhill College, Birmingham (Birmingham) 1 ◆
Westminster College, Oxford (Oxford & Warwick) 1 ◆
Wimbledon School of Art (Surrey) 1 ◆
Winchester School of Art (Southampton) 1 ◆
Worcester College of Higher Education (Coventry) 1 ◆
Writtle Agricultural College (Essex) ◆
Wycliffe Hall, Oxford (Oxford)

Northern Ireland
Edgehill Theological College, Belfast (Queen's, Belfast)
Irish Baptist College, Belfast (Queen's, Belfast)
St Mary's College, Belfast (Queen's, Belfast)
Stranmillis College, Belfast (Queen's, Belfast)
Union Theological College (Queen's, Belfast)

Scotland
Craigie College of Education, Ayr 3 ▲
Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee (Dundee) 3 ▲
Dundee Institute of Technology (degree awarding) 3 ▲
Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh(Heriot-Watt) 3 ▲
Glasgow Bible College (Open) ■
Glasgow School of Art (Glasgow) 3 ▲
Jordanhill College of Education (Strathclyde & Glasgow) 3 ▲
Moray House College of Education, Edinburgh (Heriot-Watt) 3 ▲
Northern College (Open) 3 ▲
Queen Margaret College, Edinburgh (degree awarding) 3 ▲
Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (Glasgow) ▲
St Andrew's College (Glasgow) 3 ▲
The Scottish Agricultural College

Wales
The Bala-Bangor Centre, Bangor
Bangor Normal College (Wales) 2 ◆
Cardiff Institute of Higher Education (Wales) 2 ◆
Gwent College of Higher Education (Wales) 2 ◆
North East Wales Institute of Higher Education (Salford & Wales) 2 ◆
The North Wales Baptist College, Bangor
Spurgeon's College (Wales) ■
St Michael's College, Llandaff, Cardiff (Wales)
Swansea Institute of Higher Education (Wales & West of England) 2 ◆
The South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff (Wales)
Trinity College, Carmarthen (Wales) 2 ◆
The United Theological College, Aberystwyth
Welsh Agricultural College 2
Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff (Wales) 2

Quality Management and Quality Assurance in European Higher Education: Methods and Mechanisms, F A van Vught and D F Westerheijden, 1992. Liaison Committeee of Rectors' Conferences of Member States of the European Community, Egmontstraat 5 B-1050 Brussels, tel 332-2-512 91 10, fax 32-2-512 29 96.

This report has been prepared by the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies at the University of Twente in order to feed into the deliberations of the European Commission and the Conference of European Rectors on the future of quality assurance for higher education across the European Community. It contains brief descriptions of the quality assurance arrangements currently in place in each of the twelve member states of the EC. In developing proposals for the future, it draws heavily on the experience of quality assurance bodies in three countries: the Comite National d'Evaluation in France, the work of the Association of Co-operating Dutch Universities (VSNU) and the Council of the Higher Vocational Institutions (HBO) in the Netherlands, and the Council for National Academic Awards and the Vice-Chancellors' Academic Audit Unit in the United Kingdom.

The report identifies a number of common elements in the arrangements for quality assurance in the above three countries.

The first element concerns what the report calls *meta-level* quality management which is the existence of an independent (of government) agent to co-ordinate and support the quality assurance arrangements within individual higher education institutions. For example, the Dutch VSNU emphasises an institution's self-evaluation and visits by peers, with the VSNU itself taking only a co-ordinating role.

The second element is *self-evaluation*. The report comments that 'only if the academics accept quality management as their own activity, the system will be successful. Self-evaluation is a crucial mechanism for academics to accept a quality management system'. But the report also goes on to state that self-evaluation should include consultation with outside actors (employers, alumni).

The third element is *peer review* involving site visits by subject experts, including, in an increasing number of cases, peers drawn from more than one country. 'The external visitors should visit the institution (or faculty/department) for a period of a few days, during which they can discuss the self-evaluation report and the plans for future innovations with the faculty. The visitors could also take the opportunity to interview staff, students, administrators and (if possible) alumni.'

The fourth element concerns *reporting*. The report sees the main objective of the peer review report to be to help institutions and study programmes to improve their levels of quality. However, it also notes a role in providing accountability to external constituencies. There is clearly a tension between these two objectives and the report notes that publication of a full report 'may limit, or even destroy, the commitment of those who are visited to engage in open discussions with the peer review team, simply because they fear the effects of their frankness when the results of the review are published'. Yet the compromise of publishing only a summary report of the results may be insufficient to satisfy some external constituencies.

The final common element concerns *the relationship to higher education funding*. Here the report argues that there should not be a direct relationship between quality review reports and higher education funding, that 'academics and institutions will distrust the external review teams and they will produce self-evaluation studies in compliance with perceived criteria but with little real interest'.

The report though does suggest an indirect relationship to funding through the strategy of requiring institutions, in order to continue to be eligible for governmental funding, to show that they have offered their educational programmes for external review.

The report notes the growing interest in quality issues in higher education in most European countries, explaining it in terms of the increasing importance of higher education's 'extrinsic values', its services to the rest of society, services which involve an ever-increasing proportion of society's members. 'Higher education institutions are increasingly confronted with the need to show their relevance, quality and accountability to society.'

This common 'need' of higher education institutions and systems may find a common 'solution' arising out of the elements of quality assurance described in this report and sketched above. They may also go some way to begin to address what the report sees as the further internationalisation of European higher education, bringing with it the need for 'the creation of quality assessment systems that can provide relevant information in a comparative, international context'.

The Quality Support Centre (QSC)

The Quality Support Centre (QSC) exists to support the maintenance and enhancement of quality in higher education. It has been created by the Open University out of the research, development and information services of the Council for National Academic Awards.

QSC is an independent source of information and advice on quality assurance and assessment in higher education. It provides services to higher education institutions and to quality assurance and assessment agencies in the UK and internationally. Services include:

- conferences, seminars and workshops
- development projects
- consultancy
- publications (including CNAA publications)

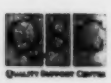
As well as its core group of staff, QSC makes use of specialist consultants from across higher education. As part of the Open University, it is able to draw upon a vast reservoir of expertise and experience, not just on open and distance learning, but in relation to all matters concerning the monitoring and evaluation of quality. QSC is active internationally. In particular, it is collaborating with the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) at the University of Twente in the Netherlands to form a Consortium for Higher Education Quality Support.

For further information about QSC contact either John Brennan (Head of Quality Support) or Tarla Shah (Administrative Officer) at Quality Support Centre, 344-54 Gray's Inn Rd., London WC1X 8BP, Tel: 071 278 4411 Extn. 306, Fax: 071 833 1012.

Higher Education Digest

This Guide to the Changes in Higher Education has been reproduced from special supplements contained in issues 14 and 15 of the Higher Education Digest. The Digest is published 3 times a year and provides readers with concise and factual information on a wide range of higher education developments, both in the UK and abroad. At a time of rapid change in higher education, it provides an excellent means for people working in higher education to keep themselves informed about developments that will affect their professional lives.

The Digest is available only by subscription. To receive a sample free copy (subject to availability) and order form, write or phone Deana Parker, QSC, 344-54 Gray's Inn Road, London. WC11X 8BP, Tel: 071 278 4411 x 306, Fax: 071 833 1012.



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